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EMERGENCY WEEK OF ACTIONS FOR HAITIAN REFUGEES!

**Biden: Halt your racist Border Patrol
and stop the whippings and
racist deportations now!**

WEEK OF ACTION ▼



SEPTEMBER 24 ► OCTOBER 2

Progressive organizations and activists in solidarity with Haitian refugees facing life-threatening conditions and brutal racist terror by U.S. policies and Klan-like border patrol agents will be holding protests around the country demanding the Biden administration end those policies and state terror at the border.

Under the direction of the Biden administration, Border Patrol agents — as if playing in a scene from “Roots” or “12-Years-A-Slave,” and bringing to life some of the worst atrocities during the Antebellum South, have been caught on video whipping Haitian refugees while invoking Donald Trump’s words about their country being a “sh..hole country.”

You would think that this shocking display of white supremacy and criminal racism would bring at least a defensive reaction from the Biden administration — but no serious condemnation nor prosecution, nor firings have occurred. And, President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris maintain a deafening silence. This means that the horror the world has witnessed will continue, and possibly escalate, if no response is felt from the people of this country and the world condemning such actions.

What we’ve witnessed is part of the racist immigration policies from

both the Democratic and Republican administrations and in this particular case reflects the rarely used public health law, Title 42, enacted by former President Donald Trump. Trump attempted to use the law to justify his administration’s desire to end the basic international human right of seeking legal asylum under the cover of the pandemic. Biden, who pledged a more humane immigration policy during his election campaign is now fighting to keep the policy alive, also using the excuse of the pandemic while many physicians and immigrant organizations have countered this argument. Creating safety protocols and vaccinations at the border would be far easier and cheaper than further militarizing the border and flying hundreds of Haitians back to Haiti on a daily basis, which is being done today.

As with all refugees and migrants coming from the Americas to the U.S., they are escaping conditions in their countries created by the economic and militarized warfare of the U.S. — ensuring agricultural and political dominance to maintain the profits of multinational corporations here. And, in the case of Haiti, the colonial relationship of economic sabotage and denial of any real democratic process continues from 1915 — when the first U.S. occupation and massa-

cre of Haitians began — to now. In fact, the Haitian refugees coming today are escaping the devastation of an earthquake in a country with little emergency safety and health infrastructure and political turmoil from a recent presidential assassination that, either indirectly or directly, resulted from U.S. influence.

The Haitian people have a proud history of helping to bring about an ending to colonialism in Latin America with their military and political assistance to liberators like Simon Bolivar. After inspiring slaves all over the world in 1804 by defeating Napoleon and becoming the first successful slave revolution, Haiti’s first constitution was copied throughout Latin America as an example of democracy. And the Haitian war of liberation against the French helped secure vital territory for the ruling class of the U.S. in the 1800s. So, the Haitians are owed.

Instead of deportations and denial of their humanity, the U.S. should immediately end its violations of international human rights and end the selectively brutal racism in regards to African peoples, including the treatment of Haitian people with the denial of their history of great political and economic contributions to the Americas.

The following signers demand:

- Immediate firing and prosecution of all those responsible for the whipping and hate speech used against Haitian refugees witnessed and documented by videos of various news organizations, including Al Jazeera
- Provide permanent shelter and health care, including access to Covid-19 vaccinations to all arrivals at the border
- Extend Temporary Protection Status indefinitely for those facing deportations
- Provide asylum to all arrivals
- End the use of Title 42 to deny humane immigration policies and its racist and selective use of justifying the denial for the majority of non-European peoples

* All actions are encouraged to adhere to safety protocols of masks and social distancing.

Initial Endorsers include:

- Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice
- Union del Barrio • Puerto Rican Alliance
- National Young Lords Organization
- BAYAN - SoCal • AIM - SoCal
- OCCUPY ICE - LA • Socialist Unity Party
- F. Christophe Silvera - Nat’l Secretary Treasurer Local 808 Teamsters
- Clarence Thomas, author, “Organizing In Our Own Name: Million Worker March”
- Peoples Power Assembly - Baltimore
- Moratorium Now & MECAWI of Detroit, MI.
- Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement

Texas lawmakers: Why you gotta be so cruel?

By Gloria Verdieu

In September, 666 laws passed by Texas lawmakers went into effect — laws that are so repressive and restrictive that it’s mind-boggling.

Some background on this writer

I came to Texas from California in January 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and months before the U.S. presidential election. I needed proof of residency to check books out of the local library and a

Texas ID to register to vote. I made an appointment online at the Texas Department of Public Safety and Health for a driver’s license and contacted the registrar of voters to find out how to register to vote.

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General Milley

Nuclear dealing

Nabisco starts to crumble under strike pressure, struggle continues

By Greg Butterfield

After five weeks on strike against snack company Nabisco and its parent monopoly, Mondelez International, workers represented by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers' International Union (BCTGM) voted to approve a new contract on Sept. 16-17. The union was able to partially derail the company's aggressive takeback campaign, but the struggle will continue.

Like one of Nabisco's ill-considered holiday-flavored Oreos, the strike tore off the company's comforting cookie shell and exposed the nasty filling at the center of the snack profiteer.

During the pandemic, Nabisco forced workers to take 12-to-16-hour shifts to meet increased demand rather than hiring more workers. Nabisco then wanted to convert the pandemic situation into a permanent profit-grab by enshrining 12-hour, 3-day weekend shifts with no overtime pay in a new contract, while also cutting back healthcare benefits.

Nabisco bosses' ultimatum pushed workers to take action, much like the July strike by Frito Lay workers against similar "suicide shifts." Many industries are now pushing to adopt these kinds of anti-worker policies, pioneered by online giant Amazon.com.

Workers also demanded the restoration of their pensions, which the company had unilaterally replaced with a 401k plan, and guarantees that the company was not planning to close more factories beyond two that were shut down earlier this year.

Meanwhile, Nabisco's parent company, based in Chicago, reported a 2.8 percent increase in revenue in 2020 and its CEO Dirk Van de Put made nearly \$17 million last year. The corporation, which includes other subsidiaries like Cadbury, reported \$5.5 billion in profits in the second quarter of 2021.

Broad support for workers

The strike broke out in Portland, Ore., where 200 workers walked out on Aug. 10, and quickly spread to bakeries and distribution centers in Chicago, Aurora, Colo., Richmond, Va., and Norcross, Ga.

The union called for a boycott of Nabisco products, including Oreos, Chips Ahoy, Ritz crackers, Fig Newtons, Triscuits and Wheat Thins: "No contract, no snacks!"

The slogan was taken up by supporters across the country, including actor Danny DeVito, who tweeted his support and was punished by Twitter, which removed his "verified" status. DeVito was joined by members of the Portland Thorns, the champion National Women's Soccer League team.

Union members and community groups across the U.S. plastered shelves in grocery stores with boycott stickers and donated to a fund to support strikers and their families.

Nabisco chose this moment to launch a major promotion with Oreo cookies featuring the popular Pokémon video game and anime characters to counter bad publicity generated by the strike. It backfired,



Striking Nabisco workers on the picket line in Portland, Ore.

PHOTO: JOBS WITH JUSTICE

as many gamers and gaming journalists came out in support of the strikers.

"Pokémon or no, I can do without Oreos until the countless people who make them are finally treated with a modicum of respect for their labor," wrote Ian Walker of Kotaku.

Company violence

BCTGM Local 364 in Portland was in the thick of it. This militant local led the initial walkout and built considerable community support, with weekly mass rallies and daily pickets confronting scabs hired by Nabisco/Mondelez.

The pickets were effective — so much so that Portland cops were enlisted by the bosses to ban strikers and supporters from company parking lots where they were blocking bused-in scabs and managers. They also kicked workers off railroad tracks where supply trains were unloaded.

Taking another page from the Amazon playbook, Mondelez hired Huffmaster, a "private security company" that specializes in union busting, to protect scabs and attack picketers. Huffmaster's goons repeatedly threatened, pushed, shoved, jabbed and stomped on the feet of picketers.

Jesse Dreyer, a Teamster who came out to support the Portland picket, was badly beaten for several minutes by the anti-union goons. The attack was captured on video. Dreyer is suing Huffmaster for damages in federal court.

"It felt really personal, because I've been out there every single day," Dreyer told the Portland Mercury. "They know my face, and I yell at them, 'Shame on you,' every single morning. It felt like they targeted me ... and got out a little bit of what they wanted to."

On Sept. 12, Willamette Week reported that Huffmaster had posted ads to hire more goons in other cities where Nabisco workers were on strike.

Contract signed, struggle continues

The BCTGM national negotiating team reached a tentative agreement with Nabisco/Mondelez International management on Sept. 15.

Although not all details have been released, we know the company withdrew its plan to cut workers' healthcare, including for new hires,

and added a cash bonus. The union, in turn, agreed to allow the company to introduce its sought-after 12-hour, 3-day weekend shifts, with the company promising not to force any current workers to take those shifts.

On Sept. 16, the Portland local voted overwhelmingly against the proposal, urging workers in other cities to do the same. However, the following day, the contract was approved nationally by a 3 to 1 margin.

Local 364 Vice President Mike Burlingham explained: "This is a way for the company to remove premium pay for weekend work... This will create a divide between lower and senior employees within the bakery as junior people will be forced into

this [weekend shift] should nobody volunteer. It's still the intentional divide the company is creating, just structured in a different way."

Nevertheless, he told the Portland Mercury, the fact that Mondelez had to sit down and negotiate with the union showed how powerful the strike was. "In the nine years we've been under Mondelez, this is the very first time they have actually sat down and negotiated in good faith with our negotiating team. It took them five weeks to do it."

"We always knew that Portland is a different climate than the rest of the country," Burlingham said. "We knew that there was fight in us here, and we had a lot of backing from supporters in the community to help us. I can't speak for the other locations, but if I had to guess, they might not have had that same kind of boost that we did here."

Local 364 President Jesus Martinez added, "It's still going to be a fight for four years. Even though the company says they want it to be harmonious, that's if they respect the contract. But they never have and they never will."

While the Nabisco strike ended in a mixed result, it was an important step in exposing and combating the strategy of U.S. bosses to take back workers' rights in the Amazon era.

As Burlingham said: "This is the working class fight. Between Frito Lay, the Alabama coal miners' strike and us, there's a lot of people paying attention — and not just in the United States." ■

Texas lawmakers: Why you gotta be so cruel?

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When I called the registrar of voters, I was told to fill out the application online, print, sign and mail it directly to the county's election office. I did not have a printer, so I asked if the application could be sent to me via postal mail. I received the application, signed it and returned it using the address listed. My voter registration card did not arrive until six months later, in September 2020.

I searched online for a summary of all the candidates and proposals on the ballot and did not find anything. I called the number on the registration card to ask when I would be receiving my sample ballot. I was told that the ballots for individual counties are normally posted about 3 to 4 weeks before the election. I said that in San Diego, registered voters get a sample ballot summarizing all the candidates and issues. She replied, "Wow, that may be why California has such a good voter turnout."

I asked for a mail-in ballot and was told that it would require a "Ballot by Mail" application. Turned out that I did not qualify for a mail-in ballot. Using my voter registration number, I was able to gain online access to a sample ballot and my assigned polling place about three weeks before the election.

The restrictive laws

I wanted to share that story before discussing the restrictive laws passed in Texas.

SB 8, "The Heartbeat Law," bans abortion after five-and-a-half to six weeks of pregnancy, before most women are aware that they are pregnant. The law threatens any individual or entity who "knowingly engages in conduct that aids or abets," including paying for or reimbursing the costs of an abortion through insurance or otherwise, with a civil lawsuit. Any civilian who sues that person will be awarded \$10,000 plus court costs and attorney fees.

HB 1925 prohibits camping in public places by homeless individuals, making it a criminal offense that carries a fine of up to \$500, and threatens cities that discourage enforcing the law with legal action from the state attorney general and potentially loss of state grant money.

HB 1927, "Constitutional Carry," grants anyone age 21 or older who legally owns a handgun the right to carry that handgun in public without a license or training. There are 16 additional laws related to possessing a gun, including laws stating how to store and carry it, and places where it is prohibited. People must read the laws closely before openly carrying

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Trump-inspired California recall effort stopped

By John Parker

California voters got another taste of the national effort by the Republican Party to disenfranchise the votes of working and poor people, especially the votes of people of color. But this time, regarding their initiative to recall Gov. Gavin Newsom, they were unsuccessful.

In spite of the policies that run counter to the interests of working people by both political parties, the Republican Party's romance with Trump, his fascist-minded initiatives and anti-science stance during a pandemic targeted the Democratic Party's Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The leading opponent of Newsom was rightwing radio talk show host Larry Elder, exposing once again the willingness of the two ruling class parties to use a person of color to push anti-Black and Brown policies — like his call for reparations for the slave owners and to deprive the communities hit most by the pandemic of the means to fight the virus.

Elder called for an end to mask and vaccine protocols called for by the medical and scientific community being utilized in the schools.

In regards to sexism, Elder has said that men are better equipped for politics than women, and would welcome the type of anti-woman legislation that occurred in Texas to deny woman the right to an abortion, advocating that those who have an abortion should be tried for murder.

In regards to workers' right to a living wage, Elder thinks there should be no minimum wage laws.

Many of the other rightwing candidates dominating the recall election hoped to launch their political careers, like Trump and Elder, by

appealing to white supremacists and anti-science voters.

Newsom got about 64% in favor of his staying in office. The yes votes for the recall were about 36%.

Many attribute this large victory for the governor having mostly to do with the voters' desire to end this pandemic. In fact, most counties with at least 45% to 48% vaccination rates voted against the recall.

Big money wins

Although the defeat of fascist-minded politicians must be considered a progressive development as a barometer of how the majority in California rejected those ideals, the amount of money spent by both parties once again exposed the importance, and usually primary importance, of big money in an election. Both parties and their allies raised about \$140 million in total, with Newsom raising \$90 million of that sum.

The top Republican Party donors for the recall included business owners and real estate developers. The top Democratic Party donors included mostly wealthy millionaire business owners that tend to vote for more liberal politicians, with the exception of the conservative CEO of Netflix and his spouse — Reed Hastings and Patty Quillin — who donated over \$3 million to Newsom, exceeding the California Democratic Party donations, which were about \$2 million.

Other top donors on the more conservative side supporting Newsom include realtor associations and even the California Correctional Peace Officers Association.

What Newsom's support did include that wasn't included in the support for the Republican challenge



Protesters gather outside McDonald's in Los Angeles, Calif., on Dec. 5, 2013. An unprecedented ballot initiative created by members of the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice in California in 2013 called for an immediate minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour.

was backing from unions, whose top donors included the California Teachers Association, Service Employees International Union Local 1000, American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees and the California State Association of Electrical Workers.

Excluding the union contributions, the donors both for and against the recall show that the ruling class is still divided on the best method of continuing the exploitation of our class, and many were worried about a radical rightwing takeover in California.

Terms of recall would deny votes of majority

The terms of the recall were such that if it was successful, Newsom could not be considered a candidate for governor. With 46 candidates running, only about 15% of the vote could ensure victory. Those terms


set for the recall would deny the votes of the majority and further the disenfranchisement of Black and Brown voters.

In socialist countries like Cuba, recalls are part of the constitution but are instituted to ensure the will of working people, not deny them. And the threat of rightwing extremism is often used by the ruling class here to further justify the denial of democratic rights to working people. This experience with the recall is included.

There are calls from some in the Democratic Party to stop the recall process altogether, instead of modifying it. This is similar to the legislation to limit access to filing ballot initiatives by raising the cost 10 times in 2015 to supposedly stop frivolous ballot initiatives after a rightwing homophobic initiative was filed.

However, it was probably more targeted at the unprecedented ballot initiative created by members of the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice in California in 2013 calling for an immediate minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour.

Undoubtedly initiatives like that, which are against exploitation and repression, are the real target of legislative "reform" by both the Democratic and Republican Parties.

Which is why, although the result of this recall was positive in the sense of denying fascist-minded ideologues even more seats in government, it will take the watchful eye of our class and the building of a genuine people's movement against both political parties of the ruling class to maintain democratic gains and push the struggle forward. 

Texas lawmakers

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a gun, especially if you are Black, Brown, or poor and white, because the consequences could be fatal if you carry a gun illegally.

'Criminal justice'

HB 1900 relates to cities of 250,000 or more that adopt budgets that defund or reduce police budgets. Those cities are threatened financially with reductions in sales tax revenues and increased property taxes.

HB 929, "The Botham Jean Act," requires that a police officer's body-worn camera remain activated for the entirety of any investigation. A close look at the law reveals, however, that an "officer can activate a camera or stop a recording currently in progress, for privacy in certain situations and at certain locations." It is not a crime to turn it off.

Will this bill prevent police from maliciously or recklessly entering someone's home and killing them, as in the cases of Botham Jean, Atatiana Jefferson and Breonna Taylor?

Similarly, **SB 69** reads, "A peace officer may not intentionally use a choke hold, carotid artery hold, or similar neck restraint in searching or arresting a person unless the restraint is necessary to prevent serious bodily injury to or the death of the officer or another person." Isn't that what they always claim?

People are demanding that the police stop the chokehold and all forms of neck restraints, disarm the police and stop brutalizing people. People, particularly in communities of color, are demanding community control over the police.

Education, history and social studies

HB 2497, "The Texas 1836 Project," funds an advisory committee established to "promote patriotic education and increase awareness of the Texas values that continue to stimulate boundless prosperity across the state." The true Texas 1836 history centers on the year Texas seceded from Mexico, led by settlers from the United States who legalized slavery and suppressed the Indigenous population from gaining independence. Mexico had officially abolished slavery in Texas in 1830, and restoring slavery in Texas was the major cause of secession.

The Texas 1836 Project contradicts **HB 3979**, which states: "For any social studies course in the required curriculum, a teacher may not be compelled to discuss a particular current event or widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs."

The 1836 law includes the development and implementation of the gubernatorial 1836 Award to recognize student knowledge of "Texas Independence," in contrast to HB 3979, which instructs school districts, open enrollment charter schools and teachers not to require, make part of

a course, or award students who participate in civic or political activities.

SB 4, "The Star Spangled Banner Protection Act," requires that professional sports teams that require a financial commitment from the state of Texas or any government entity must have a written agreement that the team will play the national anthem at the beginning of each team sporting event. A default in this agreement threatens the team with debarment from contracting with the state.

In summary

Is the purpose of the government to make people's lives more miserable? Less secure? There are some who claim this is a Republican ploy, but we say this is capitalism at its worst.

SB 8 states in the text that Texas has compelling interests in protecting the health of women and the life of the unborn child; for women to make an informed choice about whether to continue pregnancy. Yet, aside from taking away programs women need to make that informed choice, Texas lawmakers refused to expand Medicaid health coverage at no cost to the state, a measure supported by 70% of Texas residents.

Texas has over 29 million people; 154,000 are in prison; 199 on death row. Some 185 death-row inmates have been exonerated nationally, 16 in Texas.

Former Texas death-row inmate Anthony Graves, who spent more than 18 years in prison before he was


exonerated in 2010, said in an interview with the Texas Tribune: "I want to see the death penalty abolished. ... The state was going to murder me for something I didn't do. It would be naïve to think that I was the only one down there like that."

Texas, one of only two states that put people to death in 2020 during the pandemic, has already had two executions in 2021 and five more pending.

In this period of uncertainty, everyone should have a primary care doctor or clinic to help decide when and where to get tested, how long to stay in isolation if positive, whether it is safe to get vaccinated, wear a mask or both, instead of having to search for answers on social media.

Free medical care and shelter for all, family planning programs, affordable housing, livable wages, guaranteed income, healthy food, fresh air and a plan for sustainable safe living conditions under growing climate change: These issues should be at the top of any new laws or proposals being introduced or discussed in Texas and nationwide.

What will it take to build a better world for everyone? What kind of world will that be? The world that a growing number of the billions of poor and working-class people worldwide want to see is a socialist one.

It's up to us to fight for a better world — a world where the needs of humanity are the priority to us and the lawmakers that we choose to govern — a socialist world. 

Is Sirhan guilty?

Unanswered questions about RFK’s assassination

By Stephen Millies

Senator Robert Francis Kennedy had just won California’s Democratic presidential primary when he was shot in Los Angeles shortly after midnight on June 5, 1968. He died early the next morning, less than five years after his brother — President John F. Kennedy — was gunned down in Dallas.

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, a Palestinian immigrant who was convicted of killing Bobby Kennedy, has now been recommended for release by a parole board. California Gov. Gavin Newsom can either approve or deny his freedom.

Sirhan Sirhan has spent 53 years in jail. Some members of Robert Kennedy’s family favor Sirhan’s release while others — including RFK’s widow, Ethel Kennedy — are opposed.

In most countries a 53-year-long prison sentence is considered barbaric. As noted by the parole board, the 77-year-old Sirhan poses no threat to society.

A bigger question is whether Sirhan Sirhan was actually guilty of killing Bobby Kennedy. Paul Schrade, who was wounded by Sirhan, doesn’t think so.

Schrade, a 93-year old former United Auto Workers union official, points out that all of Bobby Kennedy’s three wounds came from behind. But almost every witness in the Ambassador Hotel where Kennedy was killed said that Sirhan was always in front of RFK.

There are many problems with the official story of Robert Kennedy’s assassination. Evidence points to a second shooter.

Los Angeles coroner Dr. Thomas Noguchi testified that the mortal wound was fired behind Kennedy’s right ear at point blank range.

None of the witnesses described Sirhan as being that close. Some said that Sirhan was three or more feet away.

Hotel maître d’ Karl Uecker insisted: “There was a distance of at least one-and-one-half feet between the muzzle of Sirhan’s gun and Senator Kennedy’s head. ... Sirhan never got close enough for a point-blank shot, never.”

How many bullets?

Then there’s the path or trajectory of the three bullets that struck Kennedy and the one that went through his suit coat. While the fatal bullet fired behind his ear went upwards at a 15-degree angle, the other bullet paths rose at steep angles of 59, 67 and 80 degrees.

As described in “Shadow Play” by William Klaber and Philip Melanson, this was “as though a gun had been pressed to the senator’s back and pointed up so as not to protrude.”

However, according to Edward Minasian’s grand jury testimony, Uecker slammed Sirhan’s shooting hand down onto a steam table after two shots were fired. The remaining shots fired by Sirhan were diverted away from Kennedy.

The greatest challenge to the police single-shooter theory is the number of bullets fired in the hotel pantry. Sirhan used a .22-caliber

Iver and Johnson Cadet eight-shot revolver. All bullets were fired and Sirhan never reloaded the weapon.

Two bullets, including the fatal shot in Robert Kennedy’s head, were recovered from his body. One bullet went through RFK’s body while another bullet went through his suit.

That leaves four bullets. But five people were wounded: Elizabeth Evans, Ira Goldstein, Paul Schrade, Irwin Stroll and William Weisel.

The police solved this arithmetic problem by claiming the bullet that went through Kennedy’s suit from behind without wounding him then struck Schrade. But Schrade was always four to five feet behind Bobby Kennedy.

As Paul Schrade asked LA Police Chief Daryl Gates in 1986, “How [can] a bullet traveling up and away from me can make a 90-degree turn and end up in my head?”

This is reminiscent of the “magic bullet” that the Warren Commission claimed to have struck both President Kennedy and Texas Gov. Connally in Dallas. This bullet supposedly went through both men before landing in Connally’s thigh, making impossible turns to do so.

Nina Rhodes, a witness to the assassination of Robert Kennedy, told the FBI that she estimated that 10 to 14 shots were fired. The FBI later falsified Rhodes’ statement, claiming that she only heard “eight distinct shots.”

Several reporters were recording when RFK was shot. According to Dr. Michael Hecker of the Stanford Research Institute, who analysed a tape, “No fewer than 10 gunshots [were fired].”

Destroying evidence and intimidating witnesses

Dr. Noguchi was photographed pointing with his fingers at two apparent bullet holes in the door-frame of the pantry doorway. The FBI later took a photo of these holes with the caption, “close up view of two bullet holes.”

LA police officers Charles Wright and Sgt. Robert Rozzi were photographed pointing at another apparent bullet hole in a pantry hallway door frame. Wright later said he was almost certain that it was a bullet.

FBI agent William Bailey was in the pantry a few hours after the shooting and saw two bullet holes in a door frame. “These were clearly bullet holes,” he told authors Klaber and Melanson, “the wood around them was freshly broken away and I could see the base of a bullet in each one.”

Lia Urso was in the hotel pantry three hours after RFK was shot. She told author Philip Melanson that she saw what she thought were bullet holes in the ceiling tiles. If these holes did contain bullets it would mean more than eight bullets were fired and that there was a second shooter. Yet these door frames and ceiling tiles were illegally destroyed by police while Sirhan’s initial appeal was pending.

The police claimed that they didn’t have room for these items from what the media were calling “the trial of the century.” Los Angeles City Attorney Dion Morrow told the LA City

Council that “you can’t fit ceiling panels into a card file.”

The LAPD also destroyed 2,410 photographs that presumably could fit in filing cabinets.

The prosecution badgered one of its own witnesses, Larry Arnot, a retired Pasadena, Calif., firefighter. He was working the counter of the Lock, Stock ‘n’ Barrel gun store on June 1, 1968, when Sirhan Sirhan purchased .22 caliber ammunition.

Arnot identified the sales receipt for the ammunition that was found in Sirhan’s car and said there were two other individuals with Sirhan.

Who were these two people? An honest investigation would want to know if they were associates of Sirhan and if they were manipulating him.

Arnot’s truthful testimony angered prosecutor David Fitts. He reminded Arnot of a lie detector test given to him by police Lieutenant Enrique Hernandez. The cop intimidated Arnot into saying he didn’t remember Sirhan even though he did.

The browbeating given to Larry Arnot angered the gun store’s owners, Donna and Ben Herrick. Donna Herrick had seen Sirhan in the store previously with two companions.

But she wasn’t called as a witness. “They didn’t want her to testify, because she wouldn’t change her story,” said Ben Herrick.

Disappearing polka dots

Sandra Serrano was a 20-year-old office worker who was a volunteer with the Kennedy campaign. She was sitting on a stairway outside the hotel ballroom.

Around 11:30 p.m. three people pushed by Serrano to go up the stairs. They were a young woman in a polka dot dress accompanied by two men, one of whom Serrano later identified as Sirhan.

After RFK was shot, two of the people ran down the stairs. The woman in the polka dot dress shouted: “We shot him! We shot him!”

Sandra Serrano told what she saw and heard to NBC reporter Sander Vanocur.

Vincent DiPierro, a part-time hotel waiter, had his glasses splattered with blood by the shooting. He observed the woman in the polka dot dress with Sirhan inside the pantry.

Police Officer Paul Scharaga drove to the Ambassador Hotel’s parking lot after a radio report of trouble. The Bernsteins, who were an older couple, told Scharaga they had seen a woman wearing a polka dot dress and a young man. They were laughing and shouting: “We shot him! We shot him!”

Many other people observed the woman in the polka dot dress. An all-points bulletin went out to police departments across the country describing her.

It was soon withdrawn. Why?

Sandra Serrano was given the same third-degree treatment by Lt. Hernandez and his lie detector that Larry Arnot got. She was threatened by Hernandez into saying she was mistaken.

“I don’t ever want to have to go through that again,” said Serrano in 1988. “I said what they wanted me to say.”

Show trial

Capitalist politicians in California insisted they didn’t want “another Dallas.” Lee Harvey Oswald, JFK’s accused assassin, never got a trial. Police allowed the most important witness in U.S. history to be killed by Jack Ruby, a strip club operator with ties to organized crime.

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan did get a trial, but it was a show trial. His defense attorneys — Emil Berman, Grant Cooper and Russell Parsons — admitted that Sirhan had shot Bobby Kennedy. They hoped to save Sirhan from the state’s gas chamber by pleading “diminished capacity.”

The prosecution initially agreed to a plea bargain that would have spared Sirhan’s life. In a rare move, Judge Herbert Walker rejected it. Prosecutors later double-crossed defense counsel by demanding a death sentence at the penalty phase of the trial.

Ballistics testimony was given by De Wayne Wolfer, who worked in the LAPD’s crime lab. Grant Cooper barely cross-examined Wolfer, who was later exposed as incompetent.

William C. Harper, a real ballistics expert, warned Cooper about Woof-er. The defense lawyer turned down Harper’s offer of assistance because Cooper didn’t question the police story of the shooting.

Sirhan’s defense attorneys instead put a parade of psychiatrists and psychologists on the stand who only confused the jury.

The Warren Commission never came up with a motive for Oswald to kill JFK. The Los Angeles prosecutors claimed that Palestinian Sirhan Sirhan killed RFK because of the senator’s support for sending 50 Phantom jets to the apartheid state of Israel.

The result was that the jury convicted Sirhan and voted to kill him. Fortunately the California Supreme Court overturned the state’s death penalty, although it was later reinstated.

Dallas vs. Los Angeles

The real difference between the assassinations in Dallas and Los Angeles were in the different aims of the U.S. military-industrial complex.

President John F. Kennedy was killed in a coup d’etat that put Lyndon Johnson in the White House. It occurred 13 months after the Cuban missile crisis when the Pentagon wanted to invade Cuba and possibly launch a nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union.

Having JFK assassinated gave the military brass a second chance by falsely portraying the patsy Lee Harvey Oswald as an agent of Cuba and the Soviet Union. But the coup didn’t gel.

Many capitalists didn’t trust their fallout shelters. A huge escalation in the Vietnam War was LBJ’s consolation prize to the Pentagon.

The Tet offensive by Vietnamese liberation forces that began Jan. 31, 1968, shattered any illusions that the U.S. could win. Senator Gene McCarthy challenged Lyndon Johnson and nearly defeated him in the New Hampshire primary.

Johnson dropped out of the race
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while remaining in the White House. Bobby Kennedy began his presidential campaign.

A big split occurred within the ruling class. This wasn't between pro-war and anti-war forces.

Many on Wall Street felt that the U.S. was being "bogged down" in Vietnam. They thought a bigger threat to their rule was in western Asia where Rockefeller's and Mellon's oil fields were.

Meanwhile the Black liberation struggle was surging forward and so was a growing anti-war movement. Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination on April 4, 1968, led to rebellions against racism in dozens of cities.

Washington, D.C., was on fire six blocks from the White House. A hundred Black communities had revolted in 1967.

The four month period when it looked like the U.S. would soon withdraw from Vietnam was terminated with Bobby Kennedy's assassination. A coup wasn't needed.

Those who plotted RFK's death knew the rub-out had to be done cleaner than the Dallas nightmare. Sirhan had to be brought to trial. A string of witnesses didn't have to be bumped off.

There was one possible exception. Former Congressperson Allard Lowenstein, who led efforts to reopen an investigation into Robert Kennedy's assassination, was murdered in his law office on March 14, 1980.

A Palestinian political prisoner

Over and over again, the prosecution and media brought up Sirhan's alleged notebooks with their bizarre writings. "RFK must die" would be written repeatedly. They point to this as proof of Sirhan's murderous intent.

Dr. Eduard Simson examined Sirhan 20 times when he was on San Quentin's death row. Simson was the prison's senior psychologist.

Simson noted that Sirhan's handwriting in these notebooks often differed drastically from his handwriting at San Quentin. Did someone else write these notebooks? Or did Sirhan write them under hypnosis?

To this day Sirhan Sirhan says that he doesn't remember shooting anyone in the Ambassador Hotel, which was torn down in 2006. How is that possible? Was Sirhan being programmed?

That's not an impossible concept. Naomi Klein wrote in "The Shock Doctrine" about MK-Ultra and other CIA mind control experiments.

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was four years old when his Palestinian Christian family was driven out of their Jerusalem (Al-Quds) home by the Nakba. This was the catastrophe of Palestinians being driven out of their homeland by the creation of the Zionist settler state. Sirhan's family eventually moved to the United States.

Sirhan was learning to be a jockey when his horse ran into the railing during foggy conditions. Although Sirhan wasn't seriously hurt, he continued to have headaches and fuzzy vision.

He consulted at least eight doctors but none could help relieve his pain. Sirhan turned instead to books and groups promoting mysticism and hypnosis. Some have asked if these conditions could be used to have him

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They didn't have to die: U.S. capitalism fails to contain COVID-19

By Stephen Millies

Is there anyone who hasn't lost a loved one, friend, neighbor or co-worker to COVID-19? By the middle of September, one out of every 500 people in the United States had died of the coronavirus.

That means in an average little town of 10,000 people, 20 died and over 1,200 became ill, sometimes quite seriously. The number of deaths from COVID in the U.S. has probably equaled those who died in the 1918 influenza pandemic.

There's nothing equal about disease under capitalism. It wasn't inevitable that one out of 35 people older than 85 in the U.S. died of COVID-19.

Former New York governor and maybe-not-so-former sexual predator Andrew Cuomo shoved thousands of seniors with COVID-19 back into nursing homes. This helped kill the 13,000 residents who died there, as well as many nursing home workers.

Cuomo did this to free up space in hospitals, dozens of which were closed since the 1970s by capitalist cutbacks. Twenty thousand hospital beds were thrown away, according to the New York State Nurses Association.

Some of the closed hospitals, like St. John's in the Elmhurst neighborhood of Queens, were turned into luxury housing.

Last year Fox News and Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick were calling for grandma and grandpa to be thrown under the bus. Capitalists were demanding that the economy reopen even if more people would die.

Typical of their class was California lawyer Scott McMillan. He tweeted: "The fundamental problem is whether we are going to tank the entire economy to save 2.5 percent of the population which is (1) generally expensive to maintain, and (2) not productive."

Seniors and disabled people are considered roadkill by banksters and billionaires. If you can't make profits for them anymore, you're fit for the scrap heap like an old piece of machinery.

Racism kills

Viruses don't discriminate, but capitalism does. In zip code 11369 — New York City's East Elmhurst neighborhood of Queens, where Malcolm X and his family lived — one out of every 129 people have died of COVID.

That's as if 2.6 million people had died across the United States. Overcrowded housing and working in essential jobs without sufficient protection help fill the cemeteries and potter's fields.

At least 156 workers employed by New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority have died of the coronavirus. The overwhelming number of those who died belonged to Transport Workers Union Local 100.

These workers, who keep New York City's subways and buses moving, were told by the MTA last year not to wear masks. The MTA brass did so even though they had a stockpile of masks.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. declared in 1965 that "of all the forms of in-



Ramsey Clark, right, and John Parker, left, with a Sudanese doctor at the site of the El Shifa pharmaceutical factory, destroyed by a U.S. cruise missile attack ordered by Bill Clinton in 1998. This was the largest medicine factory in Africa and could have produced many millions of vaccine doses.

equality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman." The U.S. COVID-19 death rates for those aged between 40 and 65 years old are certainly shocking.

White people in that age bracket died at a rate of one out of every 1,300 people. That's bad enough.

Meanwhile, one out of every 240 similarly aged Indigenous people died. That's a death rate over five times higher.

Black and Latinx people between ages 40 and 64 were also much more likely to perish. One out of every 390 Latinx people passed away, while so did one out of 480 Black people.

What's even more unequal are world vaccination rates against this killer disease. Despite Trump supporters urging people not to be jabbed, about 55 percent of the U.S. population has been inoculated against COVID.

But only four percent of Africa's nearly 1.4 billion people have been vaccinated.

Pfizer, which makes the most widely used COVID vaccine, raked in profits of \$9.6 billion last year. Just in the first three months of 2021 it collected revenues of \$3.5 billion from its vaccine.

Yet the pharmaceutical giant has donated less than 2% of the 2.5 billion vaccine doses it made to Covax, an alliance that's trying to supply vaccines to Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The big drug outfits got President Bill Clinton to destroy the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Sudan with a cruise missile on Aug. 20, 1998. This was the largest medicine factory in Africa and could have produced many millions of vaccine doses.

Socialism vs. capitalism

Despite the best efforts of millions of healthcare workers — of whom more than 3,600 have died of COVID-19 — the U.S. medical-industrial complex has proven incapable of containing the pandemic. So has world capitalism.

The result is that the virus has been allowed to mutate into more virulent strains, like the Delta Variant. An average of 2,000 people are dying daily in the United States.

Just as capitalism is global, so are diseases. There's no such thing as a

"pandemic in one country."

Karl Marx pointed out in "Capital" that capitalism in Europe arose from plundering Africa, Asia and the Americas. "Capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt," wrote Marx, describing the African Holocaust and the Holocaust of Indigenous peoples in the Americas. Capitalism brought smallpox and measles to this hemisphere.

The COVID-19 variants are also affecting socialist countries and countries trying to break free from world capitalism. It was Delta that led to a sharp increase of COVID-19 cases in Cuba.

Cuba is fighting back. Before the 1959 revolution the country didn't even manufacture aspirin. Socialist Cuba has now developed its own vaccines against COVID-19 and plans to fully immunize 92.6 percent of its population by Nov. 15.

Cuba also plans to supply millions of vaccine doses to people around the world. It agreed to supply the Socialist Republic of Vietnam with 10 million doses.

The socialist People's Republic of China has announced plans to distribute two billion doses worldwide in 2021.

Zimbabwe has been punished with sanctions by the U.S. and Britain since 2000 because its farmland was returned to Africans from whom it was stolen. That's what should have happened to the plantations following the U.S. Civil War, with the land being given to Black and Indigenous people.

Despite the sanctions, Zimbabwe's people have fought back. Members of the Zimbabwe African National Union — Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) go through the entire country helping with necessary sanitation measures.

The result is that the African country of 15 million people had an average 246 daily COVID-19 cases as of Sept. 22.

Compare that to Pennsylvania, a state with 13 million people and 17 billionaires. Pennsylvania had a daily average of 4,715 COVID-19 cases on Sept. 22 — nearly 20 times the number in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe shows what can be done if people are organized. We need a socialist revolution to fight the next pandemic. ■

Peruvian communist leader dies after decades in prison

By Greg Butterfield

Peruvian authorities reported Sept. 11 the death of Dr. Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, better known by his nom de guerre Presidente Gonzalo. The leader of the Communist Party of Peru-Sendero Luminoso (PCP-SL) had been imprisoned in near-total isolation for almost three decades since his capture in 1992. He was 86.

From 1980 until the mid-1990s, the Maoist PCP-SL, better known as the Shining Path in the U.S., waged a revolutionary guerrilla war against the Peruvian capitalist oligarchy and its imperialist masters in Washington and Wall Street. A parallel guerrilla struggle was fought by the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), a pro-Cuba Marxist-Leninist movement.

Hundreds of PCP-SL and MRTA supporters have spent decades behind bars in harsh conditions, often subject to torture, after being convicted on charges of “terrorism” in secret military courts under far-right dictator Alberto Fujimori in the 1990s.

A handful of “high-profile” political prisoners — including Guzman and MRTA leader Victory Polay — are jailed in the military fortress at Callao naval base, known for its brutal conditions, especially in the winter months.

In 1992, then-President Fujimori, with the full and enthusiastic backing of the CIA and the U.S. political establishment, carried out an “auto-coup” to consolidate power and suppress the guerrilla movements which had amassed enormous support among the rural masses and in the shanty towns surrounding the capital, Lima.

The guerrillas drew their main support from the Indigenous peasantry of the Andes, especially women, who played leading roles in the movement; 50% of the guerrilla fighters and 40% of the commanders were women. The facts are documented in the work of revolutionary anthropologist Carol Andreas, including her book, “When Women Rebel: The Rise of Popular Feminism in Peru.”

Alarmed by the scope of the uprising and its popularity, the U.S. sent Pentagon “advisers,” assassination squads, weapons and millions of dollars in military aid to dictator Fujimori under the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations.

Refusal to turn over body

Saluting Guzman’s contributions, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines stated: “In the course of attacking the revolutionary struggle of the Peruvian workers and people, U.S. imperialism and the Peruvian ruling classes waged a massive campaign of demonization against PCP-SL and Comrade Gonzalo. When he was captured in 1992, he was presented to the big capitalist media in a cage, wearing a black-and-white striped prisoner’s uniform. Like the lion that he is, he roared loudly in that cage, calling on the PCP-SL and the Peruvian workers and people to continue the struggle.

“The campaign of demonization against him and the PCP-SL has continued throughout Comrade Gonzalo’s 29 years of cruel imprisonment and is reaching crescendo in the wake of his death. The workers and peoples of the world are called upon

to be critical-minded and discerning in evaluating the widespread black propaganda against the said party and revolutionary leader.”

Peruvian prison authorities have refused repeated requests from Guzmán’s wife, comrade and fellow political prisoner Elena Yparraguirre to allow her to see his body and make final arrangements. On Aug. 24, Yparraguirre wrote a letter appealing for treatment for his failing health.

Resumen Latinoamericano reported Sept. 14: “What is happening in Peru with the remains of the Senderista leader Abimael Guzmán has surpassed all the limits of infamy. Not satisfied with having kept him 29 years in prison in total isolation, now the political class, the oligarchy, the narcofujimorismo [right-wing forces that profit from illegal drug trafficking] and not a few ‘leftists’ fan the fire of the public lynching of the corpse, and applaud the decision of the prosecution not to hand him over to his wife and make it disappear by cremating it. All in the name of ‘peace and security.’

“The remains of the PCP-SL leader will be declared in legal abandonment, so that the State can incinerate it and disappear the ashes. ‘This will prevent them from paying tribute to him,’ said an official spokesman. ... The Public Ministry, through the Institute of Legal Medicine, will determine the final destination of Guzmán’s remains, in accordance with current regulations ‘that allow for the preservation of social peace.’”

The National Committee of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War of Peru, which represents the PCP-SL prisoners, has published appeals from Yparraguirre, Guzmán’s family and international political movements demanding that his wife’s rights to receive his remains be respected.

Yparraguirre and other political prisoners have gone on a hunger strike to press this demand.

The real terrorists: Fujimori and U.S.

During his presidency from 1990 to 2000, Alberto Fujimori directed a reign of terror against leftists, students, labor union members, Indigenous communities, women and the poor — as he carried out vicious austerity measures ordered by Wall Street and the International Monetary Fund.

In early 1992, Fujimori and his military/police allies carried out a so-called auto-coup, suspending the constitution, dismissing congress and the courts, and implementing martial law throughout the country.

Little more than a month later, he ordered the massacre of more than 400 political prisoners at Canto Grande prison outside Lima.

U.S. military special forces intervened directly in the civil war under the guise of the “war on drugs.” Washington’s intelligence agencies participated in the capture of revolutionary leaders.

Peruvian industries nationalized under left-leaning military governments in the 1960s and 1970s were sold off at cut-rate prices to Western and Japanese monopolies in ex-



Elena Yparraguirre and Abimael Guzmán protest at court hearing in 2012.

change for massive military aid from both Republican and Democratic U.S. administrations.

Thousands of political activists and suspected sympathizers were imprisoned. They were convicted by military courts where judges wore hoods

to hide their identities and where defendants had no right to defend themselves. Many prisoners were tortured. Thousands more were simply “disappeared.”

Death squads targeted Indigenous villages in the Andes and impoverished shanty towns around Lima from which the guerrilla movements drew support. Mass graves are still being uncovered today.

Fujimori also enacted a forced sterilization program against 300,000 Indigenous and poor women between 1996 and 2000, based on an earlier U.S. program in Puerto Rico.

In April 1997, Fujimori ordered the massacre of MRTA guerrillas who had occupied the Japanese Embassy in Lima to draw attention to the plight of political prisoners.

Kid-gloves for dictator

Nearly a decade after leaving office, in 2009, Fujimori was finally sentenced to 25 years in prison for crimes against humanity for ordering two death squad massacres. He served less than half his sentence before being given a presidential pardon on Christmas Eve 2018. This was done in exchange for his supporters in Congress blocking then-President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski’s impeachment for corruption.

The pardon set off a wave of outraged protests in Peru and around the world, and soon forced the withdrawal of the pardon and re-imprisonment of Fujimori. This was an important antecedent to the movement that swept trade union leader Pedro Castillo into the presidency of Peru this year.

It goes without saying that dictator Fujimori, even in prison, is treated with kid gloves compared with the revolutionaries who fought his regime. He remains politically powerful and influential.

His daughter Keiko Fujimori, a leader of the Peruvian right wing, was Castillo’s main challenger in the presidential elections, and attempted for months afterward to prevent his taking office. Had she succeeded, her father would be free and residing in the presidential palace once more.

Fujimori and his imperialist backers are truly genocidal figures. The outcry casting Guzman and his supporters — who led an uprising against oppression — as even worse than Fujimori is beyond hypocritical.

Contradictions and struggle

It’s true that Gonzalo and the PCP-SL leadership were extremely sectarian. They refused to work with the legally recognized left movements and often acted hostile to them, even violently so. They refused to form a united front with the MRTA in their military struggle against the Fujimori dictatorship. They also were openly hostile to

Cuba and other socialist countries.

These were very real shortcomings of the strategy, tactics and ideology of the PCP-SL and soured many Peruvian and Latin American leftists on their struggle to this day.

But meeting sectarianism with sectarianism in the midst of a mass revolutionary movement is no solution. And certainly, abandoning class-war prisoners to the tender mercies of the ruling class after a defeat is inexcusable.

As Marxist leader Sam Marcy wrote, “In a revolution, just as in a workers’ strike, the first and most important element to consider is the determination of which side to support. In the course of a strike there may be any number of formal violations of the democratic rights of those who promote crossing of the picket line, but as long as the strike is on, every worker is duty bound to support it.”

Marco Valbuena, writing for the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), noted: “Comrade Gonzalo was emphatic about the indispensable role of the Communist Party, the people’s army and the united front, especially with the peasantry and the most progressive elements of the intelligentsia. He, however, made an overestimation by 1990 of the strength of the people’s army and the potential for urban uprisings.

“The PCP was also unable to use the united front to split the ranks of the middle bourgeoisie and reactionaries. It was only after Comrade Gonzalo’s capture that his party tried to avail of the full scale of the united front policy and tactics.”

Swimming against the tide

However great were Guzman’s errors, two objective factors were much more responsible for the defeat of the movement.

First, the guerrilla struggle of the PCP-SL and MRTA took place at a most difficult moment for the international class struggle.

These movements reached their height during the early 1990s, just as the world communist movement was suffering its worst-ever setbacks due to the counterrevolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

The Peruvian guerrillas were truly swimming against the tide. They boldly raised the red flag of revolution and communism at a time when many others were hauling it down. Their refusal to give up was an inspiration to many workers and oppressed peoples around the world.

Nevertheless, they were unable to overcome the global counterrevolutionary tidal wave that damaged and dispersed class-struggle movements everywhere. What was important, in the long run, was that they resisted.

The second factor in the defeat was the massive intervention of U.S. imperialism, and to a lesser extent Japan and other imperialist powers, to prop up Fujimori’s dictatorship and aid in suppressing the guerrilla movement and all left forces.

The real fear Washington, the Peruvian oligarchy and state apparatus have today over the movement in support of Pedro Castillo is its potential to go beyond electoral politics and develop into a new revolutionary uprising of the workers and oppressed. ■

Trump, the generals & a phone call to China

By Bill Dores

Gen. Mark Milley is no hero. He is chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, top general in the Pentagon's monstrous war machine, a global enforcer for Wall Street. Donald Trump gave him that job.

He is, as Gen. Smedley Butler described himself in the 1930s, a "high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. ... a gangster for capitalism."

Now, however, Trump and the right wing of the U.S. ruling class want Gen. Milley's head. They say he should not only resign but be tried for treason.

The hue and cry has spread beyond the usual suspects — Trump and the GOP, Fox, OAN, Newsmax, the National Review and neo-Nazis like Tucker Carlson.

Retired Col. Alexander Vindman says Milley "broke the chain of command" and should be fired. Vindman lost his job at the National Security Council last year for testifying against Trump. He was escorted out of the White House.

USA Today, which endorsed Biden in 2020, has also called on the general to step down.

Questions about RFK's assassination

Continued from page 5

manipulated, even to the point of shooting people.

It was physically impossible for Sirhan to have shot Bobby Kennedy from behind. The more likely shooter was Eugene Cesar, who was employed part-time by the Ace Guard Service and was with Bobby Kennedy when he was assassinated.

Cesar, who died in 2019, hated the Kennedys and was a supporter of the super-racist George Wallace. He can be seen in Ted Charach's documentary "The Second Gun."

Cesar told Charach that "John [Kennedy] sold the country down the road. He gave it to the commies. ... He literally gave it to the minority." He said that "the Black man . . . has been cramming this integrated idea down our throats, so you learn to hate him."

Don Schulman, who was a runner for a Los Angeles TV station, told radio reporter Jeff Brent that he saw a security guard fire his gun three times. Cesar was right behind Kennedy with an unholstered gun.

Schulman's account was carried on radio, TV and some newspapers. Yet the police were uncurious about Cesar. They didn't check his gun to see if it was fired or even check its caliber.

The arrest and conviction of Sirhan Sirhan led to an outpouring of anti-Arab racism. This was a forerunner to the tidal wave of anti-Muslim hate following the 9/11 attacks.

The plotters who had Bobby Kennedy killed also stole 53 years of life from Sirhan Sirhan. He should be pardoned and allowed to come home to his family.

Unless otherwise noted, this article is based on "Shadow Play. The Murder of Robert F. Kennedy, the Trial of Sirhan Sirhan, and the Failure of American Justice."

'He talked to the Chinese'

What is Milley's "cardinal sin" in the eyes of his detractors? "He talked to the Chinese." And they say he did so without consulting Trump or his acting Defense Secretary, retired Special Forces Col. Christopher Miller.

Milley didn't talk to Chinese civilian officials. He phoned his counterpart, Gen. Li Zuocheng, Chief of the Joint Staff Department of the Central Military. Calls between U.S. generals and those of other countries happen often. In fact, since U.S. presidents are pretty much Pentagon figureheads, that is where most real communication takes place.

But this time Milley did something deemed extraordinary: In a 45-minute conversation, he promised to notify the Chinese general in advance of any planned U.S. military strike.

He made the call on Jan. 8, two days after Trump supporters tried to seize the U.S. Capitol. He had also phoned Gen. Li a few days before the 2020 presidential election.

According to the new book "Peril" by Bob Woodward and Robert Costa, Milley feared that Trump would start a war with China in a desperate bid to stay in the White House.

For months the president had been making the insane claim that China manufactured the COVID-19 virus as an act of biological warfare. The Chinese military was on heightened alert.

Milley had also warned Trump forcefully against attacking Iran.

Now if I were Gen. Li, I would not trust any assurances from the Pentagon. But the Trump gang and others in Washington say Milley's effort to avert a possible military conflagration was "aiding and abetting the enemy."

USA Today Editor David Mastio wrote, "Such a call would have inevitably cost the lives of American troops tasked with following the orders of the lawful commander in chief. Milley's effort to thwart the potential demands of an unhinged president became a betrayal of the men and women he commands."

Milley also told his commanders to notify him of any "unusual" orders from the president. And he promised Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that he would thwart any attempt by the White House to launch a nuclear strike. This supposedly interfered with the president's "constitutional right" to start a nuclear war.

Milley's critics claim the general violated Article II of the U.S. Constitution, which makes the president commander in chief of the armed forces. They say he challenged civilian control of the military, a cornerstone of U.S. "democracy."

Milley and MacArthur

Some have likened Milley's actions to those of Gen. Douglas



The Pentagon has been calling the shots in Washington for a long time now.

MacArthur during the genocidal U.S. war against Korea. That was a bit different. MacArthur wanted to launch a nuclear attack on China. He publicly criticized President Truman for not allowing him to do so. Truman fired him.

Bourgeois historians hold up Truman's act as a sterling assertion of civilian control over the military. But as brilliant U.S. Marxist theoretician Sam Marcy pointed out in his 1980 book "Generals Over the White House," Truman consulted with the Joint Chiefs of Staff before firing MacArthur. He got their permission to fire him.

In 1977, 26 years after Truman fired MacArthur, Gen. John Singlaub commanded U.S. occupation forces in South Korea. When President Jimmy Carter said he would reduce U.S. forces there, Singlaub criticized him publicly. The general was reassigned. But Carter backed down from his troop withdrawal plans. The Pentagon has been calling the shots in Washington for a long time now.

George Floyd rebellion brought down Trump

The Trump gang are no defenders of the Constitution. They organized an attempted coup against the right of Black people to vote. They wanted the Army to drown last year's Black Lives Matter protests in blood.

That Milley refused is a testament to the power of the people's struggle. He and the other Joint Chiefs surely feared Black and Brown soldiers would rebel and refuse orders, tearing the armed forces apart from within. That's what happened inside the U.S. military during the Vietnam War. Milley even apologized for standing with Trump on his June 1 walk to St. John's Church while federal agents were attacking protesters in Lafayette Park.

Who has the 'right' to start nuclear war

The Constitution says only Congress has the right to declare war. How is it constitutional for the president to have the power to launch a nuclear war? Yet both Republicans and Democrats have accepted that illegal arrangement since 1945.

For that matter, Congress has not declared war since Dec. 11, 1941. Since the end of World War II, the Pentagon has bombed and/or invaded Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Iraq, Somalia, Yugoslavia,

Afghanistan, Haiti, Libya and Syria. If the generals, including Milley, were defenders of the Constitution, they would have refused to wage these illegal wars.

Who 'lost' China ... Korea ... Cuba ... Vietnam ... Iran ... Afghanistan

The rightwing campaign against Milley must be seen in the context of the global crisis facing the U.S. ruling class, both geopolitical and economic. Major setbacks for the U.S. imperialist ruling class have always set off turmoil in the political and military establishment.

After the victory of the great Chinese Revolution in 1949, President Truman was accused of "losing" China. The ensuing political frenzy led to the rise of Sen. Joseph McCarthy and the "Red Scare." The U.S. defeat in Korea led McCarthy to launch an attack on the military high command itself, leading to his political demise.

The victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and the failure of U.S. attempts to overthrow it set off a battle between the Pentagon, the CIA and the White House. It likely led to the Kennedy assassination. The U.S. defeat in Vietnam was followed by a political crisis that led to President Richard Nixon's resignation. The 1979 Iranian Revolution and the deliberately provoked hostage crisis that followed brought down Jimmy Carter and led to Ronald Reagan's election.

The right wing anti-Milley campaign comes against the background of the U.S. retreat from Afghanistan. The Pentagon's failure there epitomizes the failure of the 20-year "war on terror" to reverse the world situation in Washington and Wall Street's favor politically, militarily or economically. Unlike the previous defeats of the U.S. war machine, it comes at a time of extreme capitalist economic contraction.

Shut down the war machine

What should be the attitude of those who fight for the working class and oppressed, who fight for the end of endless wars and the entire racist, imperialist system?

The issue for us is not who has the power to start a nuclear war. No one should have that power. Not the president, not the generals. China is not our enemy. Neither is Afghanistan, Iran, Russia, Cuba or Venezuela. Our enemies are here, in Washington and in the boardrooms.

Shut down the nuclear arsenal. Disarm the ICBMs, the nuclear submarines, all of it. Close down the military bases, mothball the war fleets, ground the nuclear bombers. Bring the troops and ships home from East Asia, West Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and anywhere else. Stop the flow of arms to the Israeli occupation regime. Stop economic sanctions and CIA "regime change" operations. Get the Pentagon off our backs. Use that money for the people. 📢

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Indigenous people of Brazil fight for their future

By Nick Estes

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has given new license to the killing of Indigenous people in Brazil. Before he came to power in 2019, it wasn't clear what he wanted to build, but he knew exactly who and what he wanted to destroy: the Indigenous people and the Amazon rainforest, respectively.

"Bolsonaro attacked a woman first, the land, our mother," the Indigenous leader Célia Xakriabá told me. "We have no choice but to fight back."

Since becoming president, the former Army captain, who served under the country's last military dictator, has led an unprecedented war against the environment and the people protecting it. A slew of anti-Indigenous legislation, escalated violence against and assassinations of Indigenous land defenders, and the COVID-19 pandemic have threatened the existence of Brazil's original people, the Amazon rainforest, and the future of the planet.

Under Bolsonaro's oversight, about 7,700 square miles (20,000 square kilometers) of the Amazon has been deforested, mostly by fires caused by the cattle and logging industries. The destruction of the Amazon rainforest is pushing the biome toward an irreversible tipping point where it won't be able to renew itself and making the Amazon uninhabitable for Indigenous people.

Meanwhile, in 2021, scientists found that for the first time the Amazon has been emitting more CO2 than it has been absorbing. The Amazon—often touted as the "lungs of the planet" for the oxygen it creates—seems to be dying faster than it is growing.

But Indigenous people, who call this forest their home, refuse to disappear.

At the end of August 2021, red dust rose like smoke from the pounding feet of some 6,000 Indigenous people marching on the main promenade surrounded by Brazil's Supreme Court, Congress, and presidential palace in the country's capital city of Brasília. One hundred and seventy-six different Indigenous groups from every region of the country arrived at the encampment of Luta pela Vida (the Struggle for Life movement) to protest against their own erasure. This Indigenous mobilization, which is the largest in history, broke a spell of inviolability surrounding the institutions of power that have for centuries excluded Indigenous people or sought their demise.

"We need a union of Indigenous people," Alessandra Munduruku from the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, known as APIB, said to me. "Our lives matter."

They have a champion in Joënia Wapichana, the first Indigenous female lawyer and member of Congress. She's calling for a "political renewal" of Brazilian and Indigenous rights. And she has helped spearhead the Indigenous movement at a national and international level with APIB.

APIB is a powerful unifying tool for the Indigenous peoples of the country. Indigenous Brazilians comprise

a small fraction of Brazil's population—about 900,000 Indigenous people survive today in a country of 211 million—yet they possess a profound human diversity in language and culture not seen in most modern countries. And they are now united in a common cause against Bolsonaro's belligerence and the powerful forces that brought him into power.

On August 9, APIB filed a lawsuit in the International Criminal Court charging Bolsonaro with genocide. It's the first time in the history of the ICC that the Indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere have defended themselves, with the help of Indigenous lawyers, against crimes against humanity in the Hague.

"We have been fighting every day for hundreds of years to ensure our existence and today our fight for rights is global," APIB's executive director Sonia Guajajara said in a statement.

A coalition of right-wing forces ranging from agribusinesses, the gun lobby, and evangelicals—collectively known as the "bull, bullet, and bible" bloc in parliament—is backing Bolsonaro's project of destruction of the Amazon and its people.

Soy fields (mostly for animal feed) and cattle herds have replaced lush forestlands and traditional rural communities. Most of Brazil's food is exported, largely feeding U.S. and European markets. And many Indigenous people blame multinational corporations like Cargill, the United States' largest privately held company, for their role in driving environmental destruction to produce soy.

Rural landowners, loggers, and miners terrorize and evict Indigenous and traditional communities from their lands at the barrel of a gun. Relaxed firearm and ammunition laws have led to a sharp rise in gun ownership, especially among rural landowners, which has led to a subsequent rise in gun violence. Bolsonaro's signature finger gun gestures signal support for arming his base.

Much of this influence, including ties to evangelical churches, comes from the United States, a country Bolsonaro and his supporters look to for inspiration.

"It's a shame that the Brazilian cavalry wasn't as efficient as the Americans, who exterminated the Indians," Bolsonaro once lamented.

"Indigenous extermination has already happened in your country [the United States]," Munduruku told me. She sees a similar process unfolding in Brazil. But the connection doesn't end there.

"At the rate [at which] your country [the United States] consumes soy, it contributes to the destruction of my land," she added.

The final front of this onslaught is the very legal and political framework protecting Indigenous territories—the 1988 Brazilian Constitution. The Brazilian Congress has been voting on a series of bills that would undo hard-won rights such as protecting Indigenous territories, granting immunity to illegal land-grabbing, and sacrificing Indigenous lands for infrastructure, mining, and energy projects. One of



Six thousand Indigenous leaders from all over Brazil gathered in Brasília from Aug. 22 to Aug. 27 in the Struggle for Life camp. The demonstration is thought to be the biggest Indigenous protest in Brazil's history.

the bills would authorize the president to leave the International Labor Organization Convention's 1989 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169, a major international treaty protecting Indigenous and tribal peoples.

At minimum, APIB and Luta pela Vida are asking the government to respect its own laws and constitution. That's why a group of 150 Indigenous people burned an effigy of a large black coffin at the steps of Brazil's Congress on August 27. Scrawled on its sides were the names of the bills aimed at their destruction. The message was clear: Indigenous people refuse to be burned.

On September 1, the Supreme Court began hearing arguments in a case that could lead to either enabling or preventing the usurping of ancestral lands from Indigenous people who were removed from their territories after the ratification of the 1988 Constitution. On September 15, the Supreme Court suspended the case without setting a date to revisit it. APIB claims a positive ruling for Indigenous people would immediately resolve hundreds of land conflicts in the country, and warns a negative ruling could accelerate violence.

What is important to consider is that Brazilian democracy is fragile. As Bolsonaro's chances for reelection in 2022 dwindle, his supporters called for street mobilizations on September 7 to "begin a general cleansing process in Brazil." The targets of the rally were the Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Chinese Embassy—and Bolsonaro supporters seemed to take their cues from their U.S. counterparts who stormed the U.S. Capitol on January 6.

On August 10, Bolsonaro's son Eduardo Bolsonaro shared a stage with Trump supporters in my rural home state of South Dakota, hoping to cast doubt on the 2022 elections and draw international right-wing support. He was joined by Steve Bannon, who called Brazil's former leftist leader Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva "the most dangerous leftist in the world" because his presidential candidacy poses a great threat of undoing what Bolsonaro has done during his presidential term over the last four years.

The following week, in an Indigenous ceremony, Sonia Guajajara designated Lula the "guardian of territories," a reminder of his obligations to Indigenous people and the Amazon should he become president.

The Indigenous movement goes

beyond Brazil and its constitution. "Our [Indigenous] history doesn't begin in 1988," was one popular slogan at the Luta pela Vida camp. And the Indigenous struggle is more than recuperating imagined halcyon days that never entirely existed for Indigenous people.

"The future is ancestral," Guajajara told me. And she's calling on the entire world to take leadership from Indigenous movements in this time of terrible danger.

This article was produced by Globetrotter. Nick Estes is a citizen of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. He is a journalist, historian and co-host of the Red Nation Podcast. He is the author of Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance (Verso, 2019).

Los pueblos indígenas brasileiros

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La APIB es una poderosa herramienta de unión y organización para los pueblos indígenas del país. Los indígenas brasileños representan una pequeña fracción de la población de Brasil (unas 900.000 personas indígenas sobreviven hoy en día en un país de 211 millones de habitantes), pero poseen una profunda diversidad humana en lengua y cultura que no se ve en la mayoría de los países modernos. Y ahora están unidos en una causa común contra la beligerancia de Bolsonaro y las poderosas fuerzas que lo llevaron al poder.

El 9 de agosto, la APIB presentó una demanda en la Corte Penal Internacional acusando a Bolsonaro de genocidio. Es la primera vez en la historia de la CPI que los pueblos indígenas del hemisferio occidental se defienden, con la ayuda de abogados indígenas, contra los crímenes de lesa humanidad en La Haya.

"Llevamos cientos de años luchando cada día para garantizar nuestra existencia y hoy nuestra lucha por los derechos es global", dijo la directora ejecutiva de la APIB, Sonia Guajajara, en un comunicado.

Una coalición de fuerzas de derecha que van desde los agronegocios, el lobby de las armas y los evangélicos – conocidos colectivamente como el bloque de "el toro, la bala y la biblia" en el parlamento – está respaldando

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The U.S. ‘cold war’ drive and Australia nuclear deal

By Scott Scheffer

On Sep. 15, Australia’s Prime Minister Scott Morrison, U.S. President Joe Biden, and Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain announced their new trilateral security agreement, AUKUS, and its first initiative — the delivery of a nuclear-powered submarine fleet for Australia. The deal is a dangerous escalation in the U.S.’s new Cold War against China.

Australia already had an agreement to buy a fleet of diesel submarines from France. For France, the deal was worth somewhere near \$90 billion and was part of a plan to strengthen their economic and military standing in the Indo-Pacific region without damaging trade relations with China. The U.S. kept the nuclear submarine deal secret from the French government until the ink on the contract was already dry. France — taken completely by surprise — called the deal a “stab in the back,” and in an unprecedented move, withdrew its ambassadors to both the United States and Australia.

It isn’t only the money that dealt a blow to France, although all the imperialist powers lean on arms sales to remedy the inevitable economic contraction that happens at the bottom of their capitalist boom and bust cycle. Only rarely are secrets of advanced military technology shared, even with allies.

The fact that Britain and the U.S. are providing nuclear-powered submarines to Australia, means that Australia will be dependent on them for maintenance, training and support. Australia has unambiguously

signed on to the Cold War against China. The new alliance locks Australia into deeper participation in the Pentagon’s growing aggression against socialist China and sets back France’s plans for a military alliance with Australia.

Growing military presence

In addition to their own unilateral and growing military presence close to China’s coast, the Pentagon and the State Department have also been twisting arms, bribing and otherwise coercing countries in the region to join in their reckless anti-China aggression through a network of alliances. The World War II vintage “Five Eyes” alliance — Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Britain, and the United States — was an outdated, multilateral nest of spies.

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad) was established in 2007 between Japan, India, the United States and Australia. The “Dialogue” in the Quad’s name is a misnomer — it was an expansion of military “games” called “Exercise Malabar” that are periodically repeated. Previously, these military “games” were only between the U.S. and India in the Indian Ocean. In 2007 they were held on a huge scale off the Japanese island of Okinawa, as close to China as it is to Japan. Quad members and Five Eyes countries have also been called on to voice support for the bogus “lab leak” theory that blames China for COVID-19.

A decade ago, Australia had drop-



The U.S. aircraft carrier USS Nimitz in the South China Sea for military ‘games’.

ped its role in the Quad out of fear of losing trade with China. After they rejoined the Quad, the U.S. redoubled its effort to lure them into a yet stronger commitment, and sent troops to Darwin, the settler outpost on the northwestern corner of Australia. The unexplained presence of U.S. Marines in Australia has ebbed and flowed ever since, and recently when Australia became a mouthpiece for the phony lab-leak theory angering China, the U.S. sent 1,200 additional Marines.

France and the other European powers also trade with China and resisted joining the Pivot to Asia. The differences between the imperialist ruling classes of Europe and the U.S. over how to deal with the emergence of socialist China as a world power are at the root of this rift.

U.S. media propaganda

A recent U.S. Defense Department paper, the “China Military Power Report,” fueled a media buzz propagating the idea of China having

the world’s most powerful navy, reminiscent of the lies preceding Desert Storm, when U.S. media trumpeted that Iraq had the strongest army in the world. That was a way to justify the war they wanted.

While it is true that China has the most naval vessels in the world, the vessels are almost all small craft designed for defense of the coastline. China has a right to all the military that’s needed to defend itself. But U.S. imperialism is not David challenging a Chinese military Goliath. The U.S. has been maintaining a provocative naval presence in the South China Sea, including three of their eleven aircraft carrier groups. China has two carriers, and neither is anywhere near the U.S.

And then there are the alliances the U.S. has coerced with South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and — now more than before — Australia.

To be sure, China’s People’s Liberation Army is prepared and powerful, dedicated, ready to defend. But the people of China don’t need and don’t want a horrendous war. China has issued an appeal for a reversal of the AUKUS agreement. Zhao Lijian, China’s foreign ministry spokesperson issued a statement saying: “Facing common challenges of fighting the pandemic and economic recovery, the people in the Asia-Pacific region need growth and employment, not submarines and gunpowder,” and urged the AUKUS members to “fulfill their international nuclear non-proliferation obligations.”

La pelea de los pueblos indígenas brasileiros por su futuro

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el proyecto de Bolsonaro de destrucción de la Amazonía y su gente.

Los campos de soja (sobre todo para la alimentación animal) y los rebaños de ganado han sustituido a las exuberantes tierras forestales y a las comunidades rurales tradicionales. La mayor parte de los alimentos de Brasil se exporta, alimentando en gran medida los mercados de Estados Unidos y Europa. Y muchos indígenas culpan a empresas multinacionales como Cargill, la mayor empresa privada de Estados Unidos, por su papel en la destrucción del medio ambiente para producir soja.

Los terratenientes rurales, los madereros y los mineros aterrorizan y desalojan a las comunidades indígenas y tradicionales de sus tierras a golpe de pistola. La relajación de las leyes sobre armas y municiones ha llevado a un fuerte aumento de la propiedad de armas, especialmente entre los terratenientes rurales, lo que ha llevado a un posterior aumento de la violencia armada. Los gestos característicos de Bolsonaro con el dedo de la pistola señalan el apoyo a armar a su base.

Gran parte de esta influencia, incluidos los vínculos con las iglesias evangélicas, proviene de Estados Unidos, un país en el que Bolsonaro y sus partidarios buscan inspiración.

“Es una pena que la caballería brasileña no haya sido tan eficiente como la estadounidense, que exter-

minó a los indios”, se lamentó Bolsonaro una vez.

“El exterminio indígena ya ocurrió en tu país [Estados Unidos]”, me dijo Munduruku. Ella ve un proceso similar desarrollándose en Brasil. Pero la conexión no termina ahí.

“Al ritmo que tu país [Estados Unidos] consume soja, contribuye a la destrucción de mi tierra”, añadió.

El último frente de esta embestida es el propio marco legal y político que protege los territorios indígenas: la Constitución brasileña de 1988. El Congreso brasileño ha estado votando una serie de proyectos de ley que podrían deshacer los derechos ganados con tanto esfuerzo, como la protección de los territorios indígenas, la concesión de inmunidad al acaparamiento ilegal de tierras y el sacrificio de las tierras indígenas para proyectos de infraestructura, minería y energía. Uno de estos proyectos de ley autorizaría al presidente a abandonar el Convenio 169 sobre Pueblos Indígenas y Tribales de 1989 de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo, un importante tratado internacional que protege a los pueblos indígenas y tribales.

Como mínimo, APIB y Luta pela Vida piden al Gobierno que respete sus propias leyes y su constitución. Por ello, un grupo de 150 indígenas quemó el 27 de agosto la efigie de un gran ataúd negro en la escalinata del Congreso de Brasil, que por los lados, llevaba rayados los nombres de los proyectos de ley que pretenden

destruir. El mensaje era claro: los indígenas se niegan a ser quemados.

El 1 de septiembre, el Tribunal Supremo comenzó a escuchar los argumentos en un caso que podría permitir o impedir la usurpación de tierras ancestrales de los indígenas que fueron expulsados de sus territorios tras la ratificación de la Constitución de 1988. El 15 de septiembre, el Tribunal Supremo suspendió el caso sin fijar una fecha para volver a examinarlo. La APIB afirma que una sentencia positiva para los indígenas resolvería inmediatamente cientos de conflictos de tierras en el país, y advierte que una sentencia negativa podría acelerar la violencia.

Lo que es importante considerar es que la democracia brasileña es frágil. Mientras las posibilidades de Bolsonaro de ser reelegido en 2022 se reducen, sus partidarios convocaron movilizaciones callejeras el 7 de septiembre para “iniciar un proceso de limpieza general en Brasil”. Los objetivos de la concentración fueron el Congreso, el Tribunal Supremo y la Embajada de China, y todo lucía como si los partidarios de Bolsonaro estuvieran tomando el ejemplo de sus homólogos estadounidenses, que irrumpieron en el Capitolio de Estados Unidos el 6 de enero.

El 10 de agosto, el hijo de Bolsonaro, Eduardo Bolsonaro, compartió escenario con los partidarios de Trump en mi estado rural de Dakota del Sur, con la esperanza de poner en duda las elecciones de 2022 y atraer

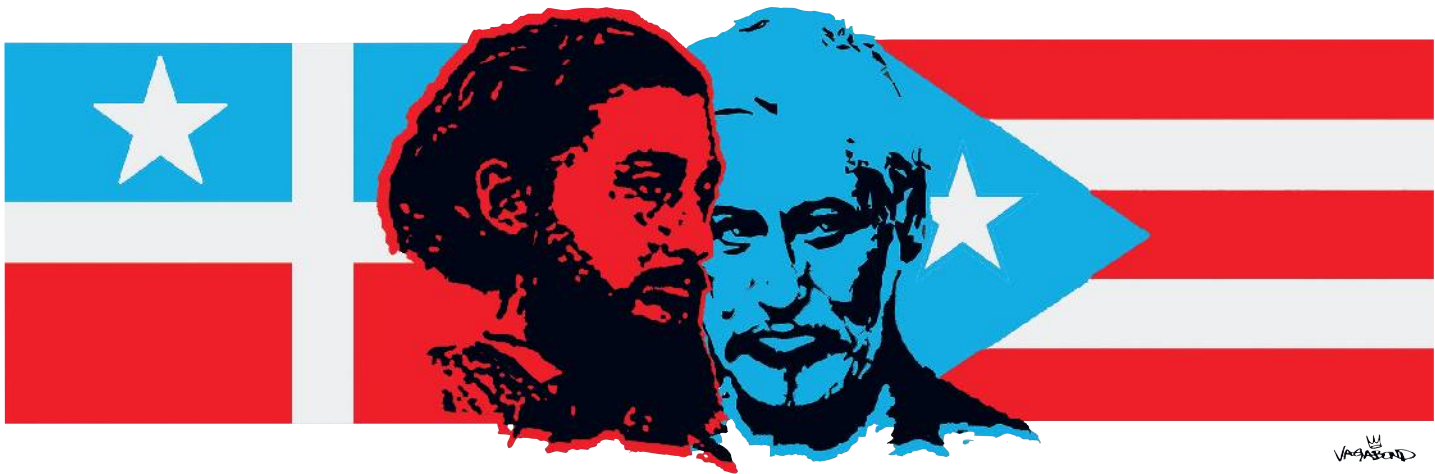
el apoyo internacional de la derecha. Se le unió Steve Bannon, quien calificó al ex líder de izquierda brasileño Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva como “el izquierdista más peligroso del mundo” porque su candidatura presidencial supone una gran amenaza de deshacer lo que Bolsonaro ha hecho durante su mandato presidencial en los últimos cuatro años.

La semana siguiente, en una ceremonia indígena, Sonia Guajajara designó a Lula como “guardián de los territorios”, un recordatorio de sus obligaciones con los pueblos indígenas y la Amazonía en caso de llegar a la presidencia.

El movimiento indígena va más allá de Brasil y su constitución. “Nuestra historia [indígena] no empieza en 1988”, era un lema popular en el campamento Luta pela Vida. Y la lucha indígena va más allá de la recuperación de días de bonanza imaginados que nunca existieron del todo para los indígenas.

“El futuro es ancestral”, me dijo Guajajara. Y pide que el mundo entero asuma, estos tiempos de terrible peligro, el liderazgo de los movimientos indígenas.

Este artículo fue producido para Globetrotter. Nick Estes es ciudadano de la tribu Sioux, de Lower Brule. Es periodista, historiador y copresentador del podcast Red Nation. Es autor de Nuestra historia es el futuro: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance (Verso, 2019).



23 DE SEPTIEMBRE

Día de la Liberación Boricua

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El 23 de septiembre conmemoramos 153 años del Grito de Lares, el levantamiento contra España dirigido por el padre de la patria, Ramón Emeterio Betances. Aunque el Grito no pudo vencer, sí marcó la aspiración de un pueblo que desde entonces ha insistido, contra viento y marea, de liberarse del yugo de un tirano, porque de la de España, pasamos inmediatamente a la tiranía yanqui.

Sin embargo, la lucha libertaria boricua, aunque todavía colonia, sí ha logrado que nuestro sentido de nación y nuestro idioma español hayan prevalecido pese a los repetidos intentos del imperio gringo de suprimirlos.

Este 23, también recordamos la cruel matanza en el 2005 del comandante Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, líder del clandestino Ejército Popular Boricua-Macheteros. Mientras el independentismo se dirigía a las ceremonias del Grito de Lares, cientos

de agentes del FBI llegaron desde EUA a la casa de Filiberto. Apostaron francotiradores en los techos de casas cercanas donde uno alcanzó la clavícula de Filiberto. Los agentes no permitieron ayuda médica y no fue hasta 18 horas después que entraron a la casa, ya muerto Filiberto cuando su vida, convertida en lentos chorros de sangre se deslizaba por la escalera del frente.

Su muerte se convirtió en otro grito de guerra contra los EUA que pensaba que ejecutando a Filiberto

terminaba con la resistencia; pero ahora decimos, ¡todo boricua machetero y toda boricua machetera, seguimos el ejemplo de Filiberto.



Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARIN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

A cuatro años de María

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Si algo caracteriza al estado fallido de esta colonia, es la dejadez con que el gobierno achichincle local atiende los asuntos que atañen al pueblo. Desde la rama ejecutiva hasta la judicial y la legislatura. Claro que es el imperio, en este caso el Congreso estadounidense – quien realmente manda aquí. Pero es totalmente vergonzoso que no haya una voz entre los Partidos que se han alternado el gobierno local, que enfrente la crueldad con que se imponen las políticas desde Estados Unidos.

Este mes, cuando se cumplen cuatro años del desastre del Huracán María, la reconstrucción parecería que está a un mes del evento. Por ejemplo, solo se ha completado la reparación de 1,200 casas de un total

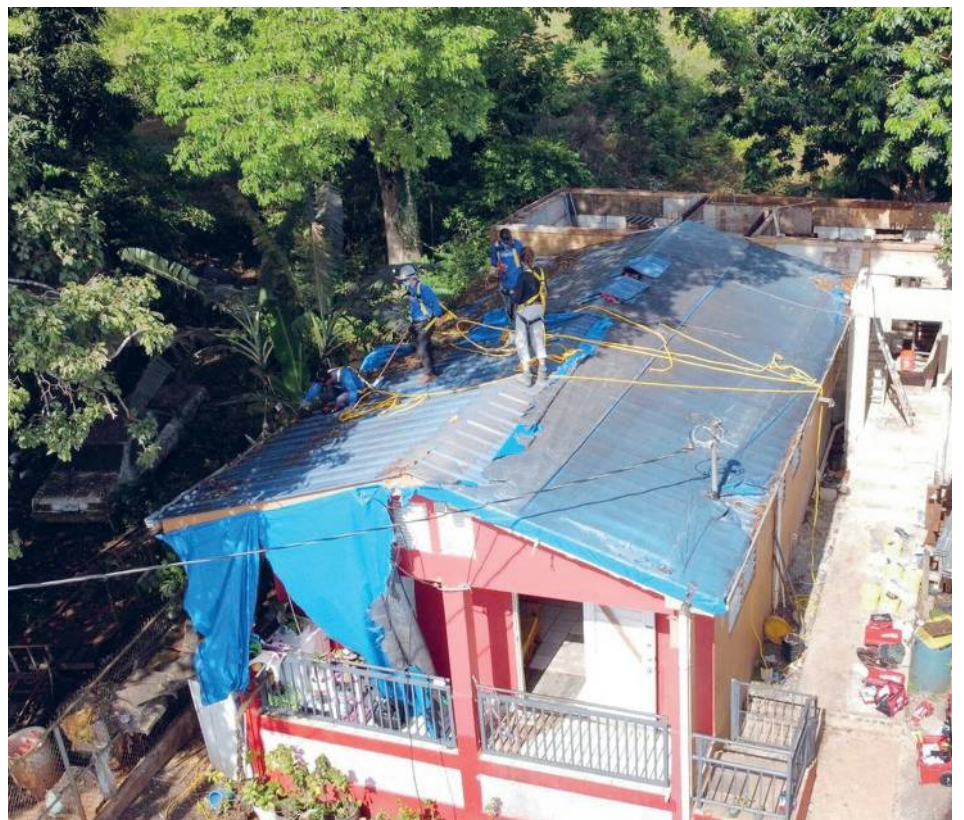
20,000 familias cuyos hogares cualificaban para reconstrucción. Y ni qué decir de toda la infraestructura desde puentes, hasta escuelas.

Culpas compartidas entre el gobierno federal y el local esconden el robo de recursos millonarios sobre todo por agentes extranjeros que participan primero en el gobierno para luego beneficiarse de jugosos contratos que ellos mismos ingeniaron.

Mientras, es el pueblo pobre quien sigue sufriendo las consecuencias de esta mafia gubernamental y corporativa.

Por eso decimos que Solo la verdadera independencia con un sistema socialista, hará de Puerto Rico el país que todas y todos merecemos.

Para Radio Clarín en Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci



La pelea de los pueblos indígenas brasileiros por su futuro

Por Nick Estes

El presidente de Brasil, Jair Bolsonaro, otorgó una “nueva licencia” para el asesinato de indígenas en Brasil. Antes de llegar al poder en 2019, Bolsonaro no tenía claro lo que quería construir, pero sabía exactamente a quién y qué quería destruir: a los pueblos indígenas y a la selva amazónica, respectivamente.

“Bolsonaro atacó primero a una mujer, a la tierra, a nuestra madre”, me dijo la líder indígena Célia Xakriabá. “No tenemos más remedio que contraatacar”.

Desde que llegó a la presidencia, el ex capitán del Ejército – que trabajó para el último dictador militar del país –, ha liderado una guerra sin precedentes contra el medio ambiente y las personas que lo protegen. Una serie de leyes anti-indígenas, la escalada de violencia, los asesinatos de indígenas defensores de la

tierra y la pandemia del COVID-19 han amenazado la existencia de los pueblos originarios de Brasil, la selva amazónica y el futuro del planeta.

Bajo la supervisión de Bolsonaro, se han deforestado unas 7.700 millas cuadradas (20.000 kilómetros cuadrados) de la Amazonía, sobre todo por los incendios provocados por la industria ganadera y maderera. La destrucción de la selva amazónica está empujando al bioma hacia un punto de inflexión irreversible en el que no podrá renovarse y hará que la Amazonia sea inhabitable para los pueblos indígenas.

Mientras tanto, en 2021, los científicos descubrieron que – por primera vez – la Amazonia ha emitido más CO2 del que ha absorbido. El Amazonas, a menudo considerado el “pulmón del planeta” por el oxígeno que genera, parece estar muriendo más rápido de lo que crece.

Pero los pueblos indígenas, que

llaman a esta selva su hogar, se niegan a desaparecer.

A finales de agosto de 2021 el polvo rojo subía, como humo, desde los pies de unas 6.000 personas indígenas que marchaban por el paseo principal que rodea el Tribunal Supremo, el Congreso y el palacio presidencial de Brasilia, la capital del país. Ciento setenta y seis grupos indígenas diferentes, procedentes de todas las regiones del país, llegaron al campamento de Luta pela Vida (Movimiento de Lucha por la Vida) para protestar contra su propia desaparición. Esta movilización indígena, la mayor de la historia, rompió el mito de inviolabilidad que rodea a las

instituciones de poder que durante siglos han excluido a los indígenas o han buscado su desaparición.

“Necesitamos una unión de los pueblos indígenas”, me dijo Alessandra Munduruku, de la Asociación de Pueblos Indígenas de Brasil, conocida como APIB. “Nuestras vidas importan”.

Tienen una defensora en Joênia Wapichana, la primera mujer indígena abogada y miembro del Congreso. Ella reclama una “renovación política” de los derechos brasileños e indígenas. Y ha ayudado a encabezar el movimiento indígena a nivel nacional e internacional con la APIB.

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